

## **Preface, *Massachusetts Gazette*, 20 April 1787**

His Excellency John Adams, Esq. Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States at the Court of Great-Britain, has lately published a very valuable book, entitled, “A Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America.” In the preface is the following paragraph—well worthy the attention of every American at this important crisis of our publick affairs.—“The people in America have now the best opportunity, and the greatest trust, in their hands, that Providence ever committed to so small a number since the transgression of the first pair: if they betray their trust, their guilt will merit even greater punishment than other nations have suffered, and the indignation of Heaven. If there is one *certain truth* to be collected from the history of all ages, it is this: that the people’s rights and liberties, and the democratical mixture in a constitution, can never be preserved without a strong executive, or, in other words, without separating the executive power from the legislative. If the executive power, or any considerable part of it, is left in the hands either of an aristocratical or a democratical assembly, it will corrupt the legislature as necessarily as rust corrupts iron, or as arsenic poisons the human body; and when the legislature is corrupted, the people are undone.”

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